



Introduction

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THIS ISSUE HAS been planned so that information about some of the many developments and decisions concerning bibliographic control would be brought together in one place. It should enable the library community not only to become aware of them, but to prepare for them. At the time this issue was conceived (1974), reports of international activities were appearing in a wide variety of publications, many of which were not published in this country. It seemed that there was a need to bring this information together and have it presented in a readily understandable fashion, making explicit as many of the implications for American practices as possible.

Since 1974 many articles—and even books—have reported what is going on in the international sphere, and have made it clear that these activities affect us in very immediate ways. We have directly experienced the result of some of this activity in our cataloging rules. Rules for description of monographs have changed as a result of the International Standard for Bibliographic Description (ISBD), with other forms of material soon to be affected. Rules for entry and heading have been changed to conform more closely to the Paris Principles of the International Conference on Cataloguing Principles. The forthcoming second edition of *Anglo-American Cataloging Rules* (AACR) will reveal further effects of international decisions, and not just the previous cooperation among the United States, Great Britain and Canada. Many new acronyms which stand for significant international developments have become part of our vocabulary. The future promises even more change.

How we prepare the bibliographic descriptions of our collections, display these descriptions, provide access for our users and ourselves,

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and extend our knowledge of resources far beyond the limits of our own collections are all being influenced by the seemingly ever-increasing pace of work on the international level. The United States, through our de facto national library, the Library of Congress, seems to be committed to active participation in all efforts toward Universal Bibliographic Control (UBC). As the requirements for UBC become increasingly apparent, we will probably experience more changes in our system of bibliographic control, changes which are necessary in order to remain compatible with international demands.

Behind all this change lies the realization that no country has the resources to provide control of, and access to, the world's publications. If, however, each country takes responsibility for organizing its own publications and shares this data with other countries (receiving in return the records of their output), the problem seems to be solvable. International activity becomes imperative for enactment of standards for bibliographic description and interchange. Standards increase the possibility of sharing between countries; the tool that makes this sharing actually possible is the computer, with its ability to manipulate machine-readable data. International efforts and the computer are interdependent; one without the other would not be effective, but the two together may soon allow the old dream of "one-time cataloging" to be realized.

There has been questioning in this country of the effect of all these international standards and agreements on our library users. There is little research to show that library users are affected one way or another by our system of bibliographic control. If we alter how we describe our collections, what (if any) harm or good does this do as far as our users are concerned? We do not know now all the effects of our present rules; it is to be hoped that the effect of the new rules will be investigated, but such research has had low priority in the past. Instead, we can only hypothesize that the changes being caused by international activities will be beneficial because our control will be so much more extensive. There may always be a dichotomy between the needs of the international community and those of the local institution; how severe and how permanent this division is remains to be discovered.

Dorilyn Hickey's article sets the stage for the rest of the issue by describing past efforts toward centralization and standardization in cataloging, and the state of current activities. She discusses the desirability of standardization, along with its dangers. She points out the probable end of American dominance in the field of bibliographic

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control, as the spotlight shifts to the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) and Unesco, where other countries which have few of our long-established, massive collections push for rapid change that we find difficult to accommodate. Michael Gorman presents the background and present developments of our rules for entry and heading. He stresses the great effect that the advent of the computer has had on our thinking about these rules. The first edition of *Anglo-American Cataloging Rules* had some fatal flaws as far as computer use was concerned; Gorman forecasts how the second edition will adjust to the needs of the new technology.

Ronald Hagler discusses the rules for description: how these have changed in the past, and how the second edition of AACR will present them. The new edition will be designed to allow more fully for different treatment by different sizes and types of libraries. He, too, points out that our rules are now affected by international activities, and no longer only by Anglo-American requirements. The Library of Congress will now have to satisfy not only itself and its national audience, but also the international community. Lucia Rather covers seven areas of requirements for standards that must be discussed and determined in order to transmit bibliographic records in machine-readable form. Standardization becomes critical when the machine becomes central to a process; what humans can tolerate, the machine can not. Although many advances have been made in the development of standards, much work and compromise for all parties lies ahead.

Dorothy Anderson, from her vantage point as the director of the IFLA International Office for UBC, describes the role that the national bibliographic center plays in the UBC concept. The center is the national component in the international communications system, and is responsible for compiling the authoritative bibliographic record of the country's output of publications and for making this record available to other countries. To do this, access to the material is necessary, as is the observance of standards agreed to by all countries. Anderson includes a discussion of the problems to be solved before UBC becomes possible.

The past and present developments in the rules for organizing audiovisual materials are described by Suzanne Massonneau. She points out that audiovisual materials are quite important in developing countries, where literacy is low. As a result, Unesco and IFLA are active in the development of nonbook rules. There has been a spurt of activity in this area, particularly since 1970, and it seems to be

gaining momentum. Josephine Pulsifer considers the special problems of serial publications, and weaves skillfully through the maze of conflicting proposals that exist for solving these problems. She feels that an easy or ultimate solution to the complex problem of bibliographic control of serials is not to be expected, but that current interest and great activity are encouraging.

Maurice Freedman's article on the automation of cataloging and the resultant products is not directly concerned with international developments, but the systems he describes and their capabilities both affect and are affected by these developments. The Ohio College Library Center, an automated, on-line catalog support system, and the developing Washington Library Network, a potential automated, on-line multi-institutional catalog with authority control, demonstrate some of the capabilities of the computer and how it will be utilized in the future to manipulate machine-readable data for bibliographic control. The resistance to change that is built into card catalogs will be removed, and much greater control and access will result. Undoubtedly, the new technology has its own unique problems, but its capabilities are stimulating to contemplate.

A ninth article on filing rules and how they are being affected by internationalization and the machine was planned, but was not forthcoming.

After reading these articles it became apparent that this issue is not only a survey of international activities and their effect on cataloging in this country, but it also provides a partial background and introduction to the second edition of AACR. The second edition may be released in 1977, and possibly will precede the appearance of this issue. Until it does appear and the final results of the extensive discussions here and abroad can be seen, many of the articles in this issue will appear rather incomplete. Many of the final decisions regarding the rules were not available at press time, but the trends are clear. The second edition promises to be as close to an international code as is currently possible, and will reflect the discussed international trends in cataloging closely.